

Around the world, ecotourism has been hailed as a panacea: a way to fund conservation and scientific research, protect fragile and pristine ecosystems, benefit rural communities, promote development in poor countries, enhance ecological and cultural sensitivity, instill environmental awareness and a social conscience in the travel industry, satisfy and educate the discriminating tourist, and, some claim, build world peace. Although “green” travel is being aggressively marketed as a “win-win” solution for the Third World, the environment, the tourism, and the travel industry, close examination shows a much more complex reality.¹

—Martha Honey,
*Ecotourism and Sustainable
Development: Who Owns
Paradise?*, 1999



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ECOTOURISM AS A CONSERVATION STRATEGY FOR FUNDERS

A BACKGROUND BRIEFING

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Ecotourism to biodiversity hotspots is estimated to be growing at 100% a year,² as one of the most rapidly expanding sectors of the travel industry.
- Ecotourism has been promoted by many as a way to achieve environmental conservation objectives through integration with economic and human development goals for local communities in destination regions.
- Despite the promise that the ecotourism ideal holds, its effectiveness remains actively debated, and while a multitude of resources have poured into the field over the last few decades, results have been mixed.
- The problem stems from multiple roots, including:
 - Misconceptions of what ecotourism does or should entail, resulting from a lack of clear or universally accepted standards and definitions;
 - False marketing, including “*greenwashing*,” whereby operations falsely bill themselves as ecotourism to capture market-share, or “*ecotourism lite*,” which embraces feel-good and cost-effective policies or procedures that nevertheless amount to very little environmental or socioeconomic significance;³
 - Flawed implementation and site-based interventions;
 - The culminating perceived risk profile that inhibits new capital inflow.
- Private foundations can play a critical role in addressing these challenges and realizing ecotourism’s full potential (see page 13). Points of intervention where foundations could invest strategically to fill significant gaps and further key opportunities include:
 1. Supporting locally implemented (e.g. state level) but internationally communicated and recognized standards and certification programs for socioeconomic and environmental sustainability in tourism—and helping to create the demand for such programs;
 2. At the site level, facilitating community participation, to ensure needs assessments, and context-specific project planning, monitoring, and evaluation, and transparent and cross-site reporting of lessons learned and best practices;
 3. Using PRIs as “risk capital” or “patient capital,” and partnering with re-granting agencies and local NGOs to help facilitate appropriate-scale grants for small to medium enterprises (SMEs); and
 4. Harnessing philanthropic administrative expenses through “travelers’ philanthropy” to confer ecological and socioeconomic benefits through operational travel policies.

INTRODUCTION

In 2005, total distribution of U.S. foundation grants for environment, animals, and wildlife was estimated by the Foundation Center to have been, at a little over six percent of all giving for the year, \$US 1.04 billion.⁴ In the same year, according to the World Travel and Tourism Council's 2006 Tourism Satellite Accounting research, spending on travel and tourism dwarfed this by a magnitude of six thousand (for comparison, a virtual honeybee next to a Boeing 777), with estimates exceeding \$US 6 trillion.⁵

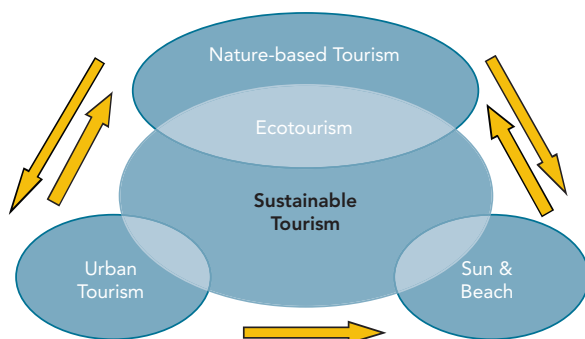
To harness some of this revenue, and to have a direct impact with limited grant dollars on this massive industry—which delivers increasing numbers of travelers to regions rich in biodiversity, and has far reaching effects on global environmental issues from climate change to marine conservation—some environmental grantmaking foundations have funded ecotourism projects to further conservation goals. While definitions vary for ecotourism, it is commonly understood within the framework of triple bottom line accounting, where environmental and social performance matter as much as economic performance. The International Ecotourism Society (TIES) offers one of the most frequently cited definitions, describing ecotourism as “responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and improves the well-being of local people.”⁶ In this strict sense, ecotourism embraces principles of *sustainable*

tourism, or “tourism that meets the needs of present tourists and host regions while protecting and enhancing opportunities for the future,” but also goes further, as a subset of sustainable tourism that overtly links these principles with conservation and development action.⁷ (See figure 1.)

In its ideal form, ecotourism offers funders both a conservation and a development strategy. However, without any universally accepted standards, “ecotourism” has also been over-used and loosely applied, with negative ecological and social implications. In this inauthentic form, “ecotourism” can also hinder the attainment of environmental and community development funding objectives.

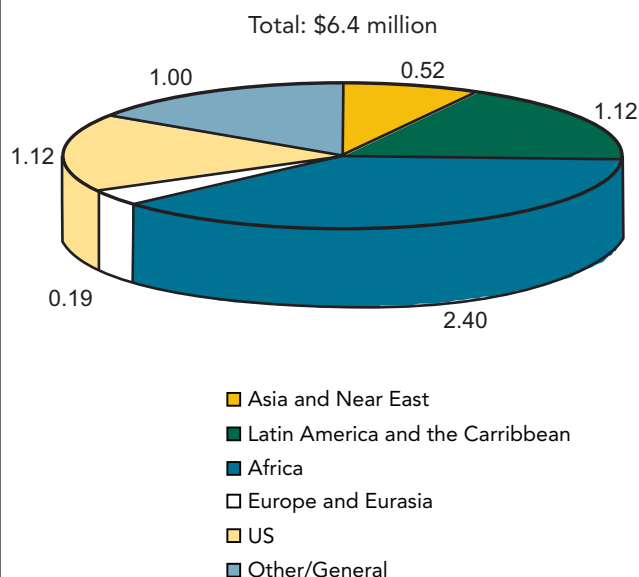
In 2005, U.S. grantmaking foundations reported at least \$US 6.4 million in funding for ecotourism and related projects (see figure 2).⁸ That number represents just a small fraction (less than one percent) of all environmental giving, and yet foundations, together with multilateral and bilateral donor agencies and with NGOs, have helped to make this niche field one of the fastest growing sectors of the travel industry today, expanding by some estimates at a rate three times faster than the global tourism industry as a whole.⁹

Figure 1: Ecotourism in Relation to Sustainable Tourism



Source: Amos Bien, TIES, cited at “Sustainable Tourism vs. Ecotourism,” Rainforest Alliance website, at www.rainforest-alliance.org/tourism.cfm?id=terms_

Figure 2: 2005 US Foundation Funding for Ecotourism and Sustainable Tourism by Region, in \$US Millions



Source: FoundationSearch¹⁰

This report places U.S. foundation giving for ecotourism in the context of the broader tourism industry and sustainable tourism, details ecotourism's promises and challenges, tracks its major sources of funding, and con-

cludes by highlighting funding needs and opportunities for funders who might seek to support ecotourism and sustainable tourism to further their programmatic goals.

GLOBAL TRAVEL AND TOURISM: WHY ENVIRONMENTAL GRANTMAKERS SHOULD CARE

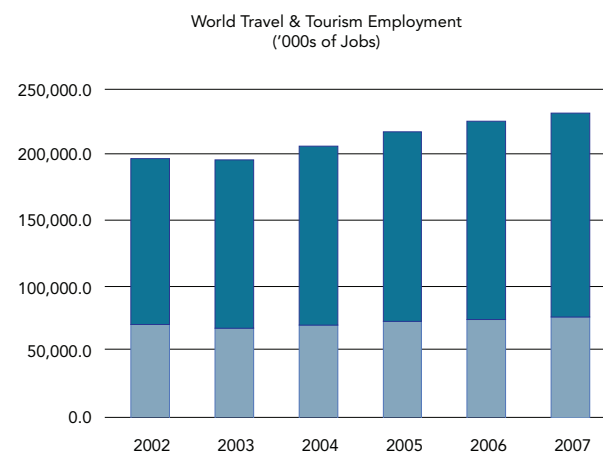
By the beginning of the new millennium, travel and tourism had become the largest and fastest growing industry in the world.¹¹ According to a 2002 report by the World Tourism Organization for the Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development:

...in 1998, 7.9 per cent of the worldwide export value of goods and services came from tourism [and travel], surpassing such leading industries as automotive products and chemicals. Tourism is already the largest sector of international trade in services. For many nations, in particular most small island developing States, but also some bigger and more economically diversified countries, tourism has become the main sector of economic activity.¹²

The commercialization of air travel made tourism a mass market, and the industry has steadily expanded ever since. In *Ecotourism and Sustainable Development: Who Owns Paradise*, Martha Honey writes that “nothing...has altered tourism as profoundly as the airplane. ...Not until the 1970s, with the advent of wide-bodied, high-speed airplanes, did Third World destinations come within reach of many people.”¹³ By 2005, according to TIES, the tourism industry provided jobs for over 200 million people, or more than 8% of jobs worldwide¹⁴ (see figure 3). In 1950, there were 25 million tourist arrivals globally. By 2004, that number had leapt to 760 million tourist arrivals. TIES forecasts 1.56 billion arrivals by 2020.¹⁵ Likewise, demand for world travel is estimated to continue at a rate of 4.3% annually (see figures 4 and 5), and generates more than 10.4 percent of global GDP.¹⁶ This represents a significant revenue source for many developing countries, as a primary source of foreign exchange for 83% of LDCs, and second only to oil as a foreign exchange earner for the forty poorest nations in the world.¹⁷

Not surprisingly, this burgeoning industry also has far reaching consequences for global environmental con-

Figure 3: Tourism Industry's Growth in Employment



Source: “World Travel & Tourism Navigating the Path Ahead: The 2007 Travel & Tourism Economic Research,” WTTC.

servation. Pleasure and nature tourism carry travelers to ecosystems that can be negatively impacted by the influx of visitors. Increased visitor traffic threatens the carrying capacity of any given destination, and the impacts of these visitors combined with any tourism-related restructuring of local environments can place substantial strain on ecosystems, disturbing native species and introducing non-native species.¹⁸ Along with impacts on biodiversity, the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) highlights tourism's impact on ozone depletion. The industry increases the use of products and processes including jet aircraft engines, refrigerants, air conditioners, and aerosol propellants that contribute to ozone depletion.¹⁹ UNEP also emphasizes the impact that tourism has on climate change: “Tourism involves the movement of people from their homes to other destinations and accounts for about fifty percent of traffic movements; rapidly expanding air traffic contributes about two and a half

Figure 4: Global Tourism Industry's Total Demand

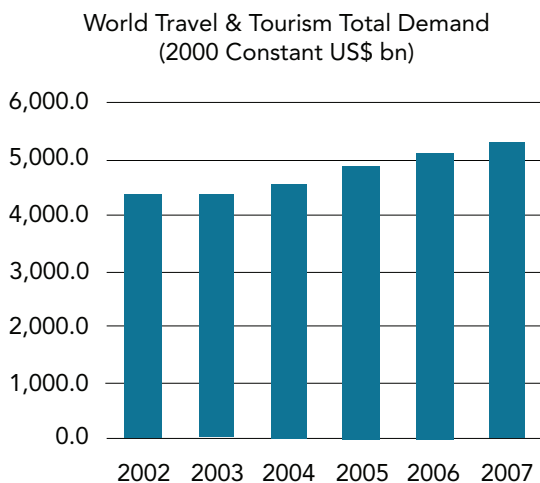
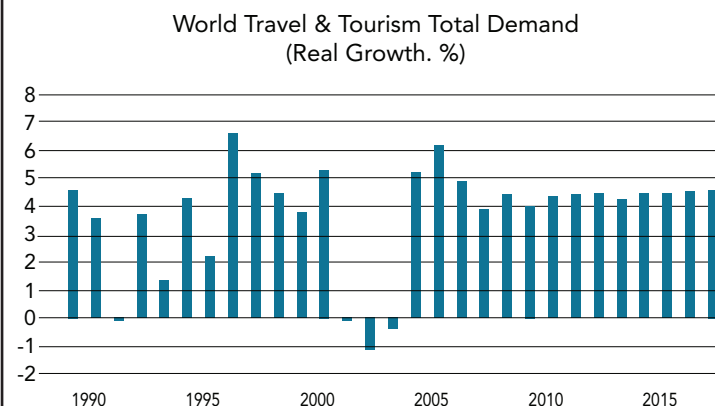


Figure 5: Global Tourism Industry's Growth in Demand



Source: "World Travel & Tourism Navigating the Path Ahead: The 2007 Travel & Tourism Economic Research," WTTC.

By Land, By Air, By Sea: The Impacts of Travel and Tourism



By Land:

- According to the California Green Lodging Program, for each occupied room, the typical hotel generates 30 pounds of waste and uses 218 gallons of water per day.²¹
- "Average-sized hotels purchase more products in one week than 100 families do in a year."²²
- By 2000, the hotel industry was "the fourth most intensive user of energy in the U.S. commercial sector."²³



By Air:

- Plane travel is the fastest growing emitter of greenhouse gases: "the actual tonnage of carbon emitted, driven by air traffic increase of 5% per year, will increase by over 75% by 2015."²⁴
- By 2015, fifty percent of yearly ozone layer depletion will be caused by air travel.²⁵
- A passenger aircraft's flight from the UK to Australia is the equivalent to the climate change impacts of heating, cooking and lighting in an average house for nearly three years²⁶



By Sea:

- In aggregate, cruise ships generate as much as 25,000 gallons of toilet sewage and 143,000 gallons of sink, galley, and shower sewage each day. Disposal and dumping regulations and controls are generally limited to near-shore coastal zones.²⁷
- On a one-week cruise, an average-sized 3,000-passenger vessel produces roughly 25,000 gallons of oily bilge water, over 100 gallons of hazardous or toxic waste, 50 tons of garbage and solid waste, and diesel exhaust emissions equivalent to thousands of automobiles.²⁸

percent of the production of CO₂. Tourism is thus a significant contributor to the increasing concentrations of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere.”²⁰

The industry can also have negative socioeconomic consequences for populations in destination communities, despite aggregate gains in employment and revenue. Frequently, local attitudes toward tourism shift in a predictable pattern over time, from initial “euphoria,” to “apathy,” to “annoyance,” and ultimately to “antagonism.”²⁹ Visitors often bring with them negative changes to existing values and cultural identities, and tourism can also create a market for cultural exploitation. Rosaleen Duffy describes the potential for this phenomenon in a case study of tourism in Belize, cautioning that local communities may be “packaged and commodified for consumption by an external audience, promising the exotic, the unspoiled, the pristine and – even worse – the primitive.”³⁰

In most cases, much of the earned revenue from mass tourism does not remain in destination countries.

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According to UNEP, on average only five of each US\$100 spent by a tourist from a developed country traveling in a developing country remains in the destination country’s economy.³¹ This occurs through both import and export leakage: local operations frequently import products and services to provide the expected or demanded tourism experience, and many travel and tourism

companies are partially or wholly owned by foreign or multinational corporations (including hotels and airlines), thus diverting some of the profits from local capture. When tourism is central to a country’s development planning, this level of foreign investment can increase national debt and dramatically alter its account balance. Even when revenues do accrue to local communities, the advent of a tourism economy can result in substantial price increases for local goods and services, and can also create an economic dependence on the tourism industry, binding local communities to an often seasonal and sometimes volatile market that can shift suddenly in response to exogenous forces (e.g. natural disasters or international conflict).³²



Ecotourists can visit a Choco Village in Panama’s Darien Jungle and purchase baskets and other handicrafts.

THE EMERGENCE OF ECOTOURISM

Origins

The specific origins of “ecotourism” have been variously traced back to N.D. Hetzer as early as 1965, to Kenton Miller in 1978, and often to Héctor Ceballos-Lascuráin in 1983, but generally speaking, ecotourism can be understood as evolving from growing concerns about the negative environmental and socioeconomic effects of tourism development discussed above.³³ In this sense, ecotourism evolved in diametric opposition to mass tourism. As Michael Conroy writes in his recent book on global branding and the rise of certification systems:

Ecotourism has become everything that mass-market tourism isn't. Rather than massive beachfront hotels, it tends to feature smaller facilities, attractively designed using sustainable local materials. Rather than isolating tourists from local communities in all-inclusive resorts, it features engagement with local culture, nature, and communities. Rather than despoiling the environment, it seeks to protect and enhance it.³⁴

History

At least since the late 1960s, the impacts of mass tourism had become a subject of discussion in conservation and development circles. While responsibility and timing for coining of the term remains an open question, David Fennell says that “there seems to be universal acceptance of the fact that ecotourism was viable long before the 1980s in practice, if not in name.”³⁵ Certainly by the 1980s, the concept of ecotourism had, according to Honey, developed for parallel reasons both in Africa, as an alternative to preservationist approaches to park management that had marginalized local communities and fueled conflicts, and in Latin America, where tourism was identified as a way to increase the value of natural capital and promote awareness of conservation priorities.³⁶ Writing in 1989, Karen Ziffer explains in *Ecotourism: The Uneasy*

Alliance, that ecotourism aimed “to capture a portion of the enormous global tourism market by attracting visitors to natural areas and using the revenues to fund local conservation and fuel economic development.”³⁷ Ecotourism emerged as a direct method for supporting conservation financially, as a strategy for shifting incen-

tives towards conservation rather than resource exploitation, and, as a niche within sustainable tourism, to mitigate the negative effects of mass tourism through less environmentally and culturally exploitative practices.

In a process of “convergent evolution,” as “many places and people independently responded to the need for more nature travel opportunities in line with society’s efforts to become more ecologically minded,” these many facets of ecotourism caught the attention of funders and NGOs, as well as consumers.³⁸

Tourists increasingly began opting away from trips to established vacation destinations with “overcrowded, unpleasant conditions spurred by relatively affordable and plentiful airline routes,” choosing instead to venture off the beaten track: “by the early 1990s, [ecotourism] had coalesced into the hottest new genre of environmentally and socially responsible travel.”³⁹ In the ensuing decade, these novel travel patterns created pressures and opportunities for newly popular destinations. At the same time, ecotourism became an integral part of development planning in most LDCs, with funders—predominantly led by multilateral and bilateral agencies—backing those strategies financially.⁴⁰

These agencies’ involvement in tourism over the last thirty-plus years has had a turbulent history. Starting in the 1960s, tourism development funding by multilateral and bilateral agencies developed, according to a 2003 study of ecotourism investment by Susan Heher, as a reflection of the post-colonial era, when donor agencies sought to stimulate economic growth and conserve cultural and natural resources in the LDCs for both “selfish and altruistic reasons.”⁴¹ The World

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Bank (or International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, IBRD) has had the longest and largest financial commitment to tourism development. Between 1969 and 1979, the Bank provided roughly \$US 450 million in loans for more than twenty large-scale tourism projects in developing countries.⁴² Honey describes the World Bank's tourism investments in this era as marred by "a string of financially and environmentally disastrous projects in such countries as Egypt, South Korea, and Morocco."⁴³ These failures led to the closure of the World Bank's tourism department in 1980. At the time, the World Bank and other multilateral agencies "had to write-off approximately \$10-\$12 billion in poor tourism investments"⁴⁴

Donor agency funding for tourism projects ebbed in the following decade, but reemerged along with the rising tide of sustainable development, with sustainable tourism now promoted as a "legitimate" development model.⁴⁵ By the 1990s, the World Bank was again providing millions of dollars for tourism-related development projects.⁴⁶ From 1985 to 1995, USAID commissioned more than fifty studies related to ecotourism, and had put more than \$2 billion into more than 100 ecotourism-related projects.⁴⁷

Ecotourism had become enough of a global catchphrase that the United Nations declared 2002 the International Year of Ecotourism, culminating with the Quebec Declaration on Ecotourism, affirming:

...that ecotourism embraces the principles of sustainable tourism, concerning the economic, social and environmental impacts of tourism. It also embraces the following specific principles which distinguish it from the wider concept of sustainable tourism:

- Contributes actively to the conservation of natural and cultural heritage,
- Includes local and indigenous communities in its planning, development and operation, and contributing to their well-being,
- Interprets the natural and cultural heritage of the destination to visitors,
- Lends itself better to independent travelers, as well as to organized tours for small size groups.⁴⁸

This year, on the fifth anniversary of the International Year of Ecotourism, UNEP, TIES, and Ecotourism Norway convened the Global Ecotourism Conference,



Ecotourists boat upriver on the Rio Tambopata in the Peruvian Amazon.

revisiting the Quebec Declaration and issuing the Oslo Statement on Ecotourism to “assess the current state of the global ecotourism community, to evaluate the challenges facing ecotourism today, and to establish goals and benchmarks for the coming years.”⁴⁹ Conservation challenges underscored in the document include climate change, as both a consequence and a threat to tourism, coupled with the tourism industry’s growth

(an increase of 23% in world tourism arrivals since 2002, and an expectation that those will double by 2020).⁵⁰ To address these challenges, the statement recommends “adapted travel patterns” (i.e. fewer, longer trips), alternative and energy-efficient transportation, reduced and zero-emission technologies, and support for carbon offset programs.⁵¹

Ecotourism: A Timeline

- 1965 – N.D. Hetzer publishes “Environment, Tourism, Culture,” in *LINKS*.
- 1967 – World Bank’s first tourism industry loan through the International Finance Corporation, for a hotel in Kenya.
- 1976 – Gerardo Budowski publishes article outlining ways that tourism can support environmental conservation, as well as undermine it.
- 1978 – Kenton Miller publishes *Planning National Parks for Ecodevelopment: Methods and Cases from Latin America*.
- 1980 – Manila Declaration on World Tourism.
- 1983 – Héctor Ceballos-Lascuráin uses “ecotourism” in reference to PRONATURA’s work in Mexico.
- 1985 – USAID begins funding nature-based tourism in conjunction with WWF.
- 1989 – USAID launches Parks in Peril.
- 1990 – The Ecotourism Society (later to become The International Ecotourism Society) established.
- 1991 – American Society for Travel Agents establishes a formal Environmental Committee .
- 1992 – IUCN IV World Congress on National Parks and Protected Areas, “Ecotourism Consultancy Program” established to provide consulting services for ecotourism planners.
- 1995 – WTTC, WTO, and the Earth Council publish *Agenda 21* for the Travel and Tourism Industry.
- 1996 – IUCN Ecotourism Consultancy Program becomes larger “Task Force on Tourism and Protected Areas”
- 1999 – The UNWTO approves its ten-point Global Code of Ethics for Tourism (GCET). “to help minimize the negative impacts of tourism on the environment and on cultural heritage while maximizing the benefits for residents of tourism destinations.”⁵²
- 2000 – Mohonk Mountain House international conference on certification programs, resulting in unanimously approved framework and universal standards for sustainable tourism and ecotourism certification (the Mohonk Agreement).
- 2001 – Rainforest Alliance launches its Sustainable Tourism Stewardship Council (STSC) feasibility study.
- 2002 – United Nations declared International Year of Ecotourism in 2002, Quebec Declaration on Ecotourism issued.
- 2003 – World Ecotourism Summit in Quebec; Rainforest Alliance launches Sustainable Tourism Certification Network of the Americas.
- 2007 – Global Ecotourism Conference, organized by UNEP, TIES, and Ecotourism Norway, Oslo Statement on Ecotourism issued.

REALIZING ECOTOURISM'S POTENTIAL

There can be no question that disparate views exist on how and at what level ecotourism ought to be conceptualized and delivered. Like so many other things, it depends on the angle from which one approaches the subject.

—David Fennell, *Ecotourism: An Introduction*, 2003

Even with the many admitted challenges it faces, ecotourism can offer “a set of principles and practices that have the potential to fundamentally transform the way the tourism industry operates.”⁵³ However, ecotourism projects can also devalue ecological assets or harm the welfare of local communities. As Regina Scheyvens cautions in discussing ecotourism and community empowerment, “it is precisely these more remote, less developed tourism areas that ecotourists seek which are most vulnerable to cultural disruption and environmental degradation.”⁵⁴ Honey echoes this concern, explaining that “at its worst, when not practiced with the utmost care, ecotourism threatens the very ecosystems on which it depends.”⁵⁵

Conservation

At the most basic level, and despite the clear risks that mass tourism presents to conservation, ecotourism can protect and add value to biodiversity, wildlife, and publicly managed protected areas and private reserves, bolstering or even replacing environmental regulations that may be difficult to enforce, while simultaneously improving local communities' welfare. Ecotourism is also seen as an environmental education opportunity to heighten both visitors' and residents' awareness of environmental and conservation issues, and even to inspire conservation action. These benefits—and lessons—are reinforced when ecotourism ventures adhere to sustainable design principles in planning and management, with careful attention to the impacts of consumption patterns, construction, transportation, or other necessary infrastructure (e.g. waste and pollution management systems).⁵⁶

Even if ecotourism achieves the goals and criteria above, however, some scholars have argued that direct funding for conservation costs less and works more effectively than does funding for eco-friendly commercial activities, including ecotourism, to indirectly serve as conservation mechanisms. In their 2002 “The Cost-Effectiveness of Conservation Payments,” Paul

J. Ferraro and R. David Simpson calculate direct payments (i.e. “payments to individuals or groups that protect ecosystems and thereby supply public services of ecological value”) to be more cost-effective than the billions in funding that donors have invested in commercial enterprises designed to benefit conservation.⁵⁷ However, as the authors admit, any conservation approach, direct or otherwise, also requires an often elusive “institutional context in which it can be implemented,” and they add a disclaimer that they “do not dispute the wisdom of making *profit-maximizing* investments in eco-friendly commercial activities.”⁵⁸ This suggests that when carefully planned and implemented, profit-maximizing ecotourism can in fact deliver successful and cost-effective conservation outcomes. Even then, not all critical ecosystems stand to benefit, however. As Duffy explains, “mangroves are less financially viable than coral reefs because visitors are less likely to want to see them.”⁵⁹



Bald eagle in flight. Bella Bella, British Columbia.

In B.C.'s Great Bear Rainforest, ecotourism is enthusiastically promoted as a sustainable development alternative to the industrial-scale logging that incited protests and massive environmental policy and markets campaigns throughout the 1980s and 1990s.

Socioeconomics and Development

Strictly defined—by most definitions, at least—ecotourism ventures should function as integrated conservation and development projects (ICDPs), delivering both socioeconomic and ecological benefits. When proper mechanisms are in place to prevent leakage, the tourism industry can in fact help to facilitate a transfer of wealth at a global scale from North to South, contributing to LDC government finances and channeling revenue directly to conservation through managed area entrance fees or taxes. Ecotourism has also been credited with promoting peace, by providing opportunities for educational and cultural exchange. As mentioned above, ecotourism can realign incentives when incorporated into development planning, and by favoring conservation of natural and socio-cultural resources and traditions, ecotourism may arguably create longer-term education, employment, and income generation opportunities than would development driven by less sustainable resource use. The shift in incentives can also, in turn, foster social norms and formal regulations—for tourism and other industries—that together encourage a self-perpetuating cycle of sustainable development.⁶⁰

Some have argued, however, that attaining measurable socioeconomic development goals can present a fundamental challenge for ecotourism operations backed by donors with a primary interest in environmental con-

servation. As evidenced by ongoing debates about the role that conservation NGOs and funders have played in marginalizing indigenous and other local communities, meeting this challenge is critical.⁶¹ In a discussion of the promotion of ecotourism for its socioeconomic merits, Jim Butcher contends that “the common association of ecotourism with sustainable development masks a clear emphasis on conservation over development...this [non-consumption of natural capital] rules out transformative development.” He argues further, with broader implications for many integrated conservation and development strategies, that this weakens claims that ecotourism can serve as a viable conservation *and* development strategy. With limits on the potential for economic gain, he questions ecotourism’s ultimate potential “to reconcile conservation and development in the midst of poverty.”⁶²

Indeed, while the case for ecotourism’s success as an economic development strategy is often made by citing profits accrued by local communities, these figures rarely track how many community members or families actually benefit (i.e. the width, rather than absolute value, of welfare gain). Other non-monetary measures of poverty and development (e.g. increases in community literacy rates, or changes in public health statistics) require long-term studies, and few ecotourism projects, if any at all, have gathered such data. The interactions



In the Peruvian Amazon, the Ese-Eja Community offers tours of its ethnobotanical gardens, and encourages visitors to help support the project financially.

between ecotourists and host communities, though “often overlooked,” can have socially and politically significant effects.⁶³ Scheyvens contends that “even where ecotourism results in economic benefits for a community, it may result in damage to social and cultural systems thus undermining people’s overall quality of life.”⁶⁴

To ascertain the net effect that ecotourism has on local communities, Scheyvens recommends, first, that local communities exert at least some control over proximate ecotourism operations, and that ecotourism’s successful delivery of socioeconomic benefits be assessed by a thorough review of economic, psychological, social, and political empowerment. Accordingly, evidence would include (1) tangible and widely distributed “signs of improvements from the cash that is earned (e.g. improved water systems),” (2) enhanced confidence and self-esteem among traditionally marginalized groups within the community (e.g. seeking “further education and training opportunities), (3) community “cohesion” and “development projects,” and (4) a political structure “which fairly represents the needs and interests of all community groups.”⁶⁵

Such participatory development processes in the planning stages and long-term community-level research require additional time and funding, which deter many investors (including the many private entrepreneurs who back site-specific ecotourism projects and ecolodge developments), when “most ecotourism enterprises typically face a funding gap.”⁶⁶ Yet to be an effective conservation strategy, ecotourism projects require careful and context-specific planning, so that the ventures are characterized not just by environmental sustainability, nor just by profit-maximization, but also by demonstrable welfare gains and broad community and stakeholder participation.

Because of the ease with which ecotourism can be marketed without meaningfully fulfilling all of these criteria, advocates argue that “ecotourism needs to move beyond conceptualization to codification, and it is here that green certification programs are viewed as having a central role...certification that includes socioeconomic and environmental criteria seeks to set standards and measure the benefits to host countries, local communities, and the environment.”⁶⁷

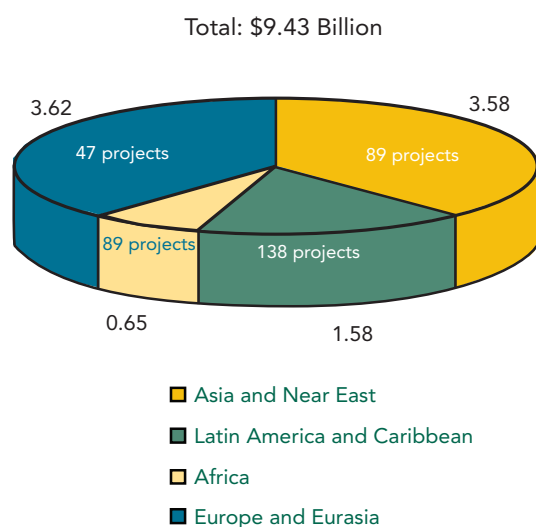


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THE FUNDING LANDSCAPE

Efforts to gather precise data on the amount of grants and loans for ecotourism are obscured by its fluid definitions and because it is frequently folded into larger development or conservation initiatives. However, research by George Washington University's International Institute of Tourism Studies (GWU/IITS) provides a point of context. Through their Development Assistance Network for Tourism Enhancement and Investment (DANTEI), researchers found that from 2001–2010, at least US\$9.43 billion will have poured into 363 projects from donors for tourism development projects around the world (see figure 6).⁶⁸ Foundation funding for ecotourism would make up less than one percent of this amount, which averages \$US one billion each year.

Figure 6: DANTEI Tourism Project Funding Estimates, 2001-2010, by Region, in \$US Billions



Source: Donald E. Hawkins, "Transferring Tourism Knowledge," 2006.

Reporting on this research, Donald E. Hawkins identifies (1) bilateral donors, (2) multilateral donors and development banks, and, at a smaller scale, (3) corporate philanthropy, (4) big international NGOs (BINGOs), and (5) international foundations as the major sources of funding for sustainable tourism projects.⁶⁹ Within this group, multilateral and bilateral orga-

nizations dominate the ecotourism funding landscape by far: "international lending and aid agencies, under the banner of sustainable rural development, local income generation, biodiversity, institutional capacity building, and infrastructure development, pump millions of dollars into projects with ecotourism components."⁷⁰ Currently, as in the past, the largest portion of funding for sustainable tourism projects comes from the World Bank, through the International Finance Corporation (IFC) and the Global Environment Facility (GEF). Close behind are the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) and United States Agency for International Development (USAID).⁷¹

After 2001, funding for ecotourism and sustainable tourism began to decline, as individual grants and loans have decreased "in keeping with the principles of supporting sustainable tourism and promoting the development of small and medium enterprises," but also as donors have had to contend with new financial pressures, and as results from twenty years of funding have begun to depict ecotourism as a relatively risky investment.⁷²

This risk has both caused and is caused by inherent finance challenges in the ecotourism model. These include the fragmented nature of tourism projects (especially within other larger programs with overriding goals for community development or natural resource management, which often supersede any profit-making objectives) and the related lack of market data, as Heher's ecotourism investment model study shows:

It would seem that ecotourism is in something of a "Catch 22". In order for ecotourism to become a viable and successful model, that delivers its envisaged returns, it needs to access new sources of capital, as current investment models and capital structures do not easily lend themselves to ecotourism's version of the "triple bottom line" focused business model, where returns are lower and holding periods longer. But the business case for ecotourism needs to be proved before more capital will become available. There are substantial funds available from the donor and NGO community for conservation and biodiversity, but they are constrained from investing directly in what are seen to be commercial ventures. Mainstream commercial

investors and lenders are deterred by the unproven and risky nature of ecotourism as a business.⁷³

Certainly, philanthropy, with its power to convene, can serve as a bridge between the public and private sectors, and can help to facilitate communication, knowledge transfer, and coordination among public and private sector stakeholders. Heher argues that ecotourism needs the active engagement of the private sector, needing to “produce ‘bankable cash flows’ if we want to realize its promise for social and environmental returns...[but] the separation between the development agencies and NGOs and business is harming the industry.”⁷⁴ And while funders are, as she points out, often limited in

their ability to invest in non-charitable, “commercial” enterprises, program related investments and other creative mechanisms exist that allow foundations and some of the newer philanthropic organizations to tap into funds that are inaccessible through traditional grants.

Ecotourism ventures can, with careful, context-specific planning and implementation, deliver the environmental and socioeconomic benefits that funders seek, but at this stage in its development, the field of ecotourism faces some fundamental challenges. Still, Honey argues that “...although ecotourism is indeed rare, often mis-defined, and usually imperfect, it is still in its infancy, not on its deathbed.”⁷⁵

CONCLUSION: POINTS OF INTERVENTION FOR FOUNDATIONS

Environmental foundations can play a unique and constructive role in helping the ecotourism sector mature, with an understanding of the nuanced challenges and enormous potential that ecotourism presents. The following represent some of the greatest current needs and opportunities for funders.

Intervention Point 1: Standards and Certification

First, because ecotourism has been embraced and promoted by so many different groups with different objectives, the field lacks universally accepted standards. The tourism industry has diluted the concept of ecotourism (“ecotourism lite”) by adopting “small, cosmetic, and often cost-saving steps rather than fundamental reforms that constitute socially and environmentally sensitive practices,” and has become rampant with greenwashing, as companies “attempt to ride on the crest of the ecotourism wave” for profit.⁷⁶

Some organizations have begun to make progress in addressing these challenges, but foundations could have a major impact on the field of ecotourism and the broader tourism industry by fostering and supporting effective certification programs for sustainable tourism, as an important first stage in achieving the lofty objectives of ecotourism in its authentic form. As Honey writes, “Ideally, if tourism is to become an industry truly grounded upon sustainable development, it must all be based on ecotourism principles and practices. But

we are, of course, far from this reality. Therefore, a more attainable but still enormously important step is to promote worldwide adoption of sustainable tourism certification programs.”⁷⁷

Intervention Point 2: Community, Context, and Communication

Ecotourism’s track record has been marred by flawed implementation at the site level, resulting from divergent priorities (e.g. seeking only human development objectives without conservation goals, or vice-versa) and from planning without sufficient or appropriate planning and community participation. Local communities must be recognized as heterogeneous, with different perspectives, interests, and needs that should be assessed thoroughly in any project scoping phase (and throughout the duration), with attention to all voices, including those that may be marginalized within a community. Likewise, projects must proceed with an awareness of site-specific, contextual differences from ecological and socioeconomic perspectives.

Philanthropy has a strong history of involvement in and support for participatory and context-specific planning, and can build on this history and enhance it through community-based ecotourism projects. Foundations with community-based ecotourism project grants reported in their recent 990s include Packard, Ford, and McKnight. Facilitating the monitoring and evaluation of such programs (in partnership with NGOs

Standards & Certification

Certification has a proven ability to move industries towards adopting process and performance standards. Certification schemes for safety, cleanliness, and quality in the tourism industry (including Michelin, AAA, and others) have been around for at least a century. In *Branded!: How the 'Certification Revolution' is Transforming Global Corporations*, Michael Conroy reports that "some 80 different programs around the world...claimed to certify some aspects of tourism" by the end of 2005.

But because travel and tourism include a wide and varied range of goods and service providers (e.g. outbound and inbound tour operators, lodges, airlines, cruise ships, etc.), and span the many geographies around the globe, many of these existing certification programs and ecolabeling schemes focus on single or just a few pieces of this jigsaw industry, leaving consumers unsure about what each certification program or ecolabel means and how they all fit together.

Even worse, certification without standards has contributed to the greenwashing of the industry. Martha Honey relates a story of a test by London's Worldwide Television News in 1994, when the agency "set up a phony business called 'Greenman Travel' and sent an application and \$200 to Green Globe," a forerunner in the field of sustainability labeling for tourism. At the time, she explains, WTTC's Green Globe logo program gave tourism companies usage rights for the logo in exchange for a written pledge from the company to work towards the sustainability practices listed in the UN Agenda 21. With the simple exercise of sending a check, "Greenman Travel" acquired a certificate and logo, and the story demonstrates the potential for such schemes to be used for marketing purposes without any substantive backing. The Green Globe program has since been restructured and enhanced as the global Green Globe 21, with independent auditing, and a two-stage logo for use (1) by operations undergoing the process of certification and (2) for those which have been certified. Today, the story demonstrates the existing demand for more reliable measures of sustainability in travel and tourism.

Other efforts are underway to coordinate some of the most effective existing local, state, and regional programs on an internationally recognized stage. In 2000, representatives of many of these programs came from some twenty countries around the world to meet at the Mohonk Mountain House in New York, concluding the meeting with a unanimously approved set of principles for any sustainable tourism certification scheme, and a framework for understanding ecotourism as a narrower subset of sustainable tourism.

Building on the Mohonk Agreement and the principles it established, Rainforest Alliance, The International Ecotourism Society, and the Center on Ecotourism and Sustainable Development began a joint project with funding from the Ford Foundation for initial implementation of a Sustainable Tourism Stewardship Council. A notable example of a program funded at the standards and certification intervention point, the STSC has been conceived as a confederation of regional networks (the first network, the Sustainable Tourism Certification Network of the Americas launched in 2003), with an emphasis on "harmonizing" and "strengthening" existing systems, allowing for local implementation while facilitating wider communication and broader recognition of standards and criteria.

As with all travel and tourism certification, this system relies on voluntary participation, but manages in its existing structure to engage multiple stakeholders. One of the debated issues in certification programs generally, and tourism specifically, centers on issues of equity: organizations and countries with greater power have an ability to sway the criteria-setting process in their favor, and those with greater wealth have a greater ability to afford to meet these criteria. The equity challenges make it difficult for smaller, local enterprises to compete in a global market. However, engaging multiple stakeholders and working with existing programs, as the Sustainable Tourism Certification Network of the Americas has, can help to meet these challenges.

continued

An unanswered question—which Conroy says “may be the great, unresolved conundrum of tourism certification”—is whether there is enough critical mass behind consumer demand for certification to shift the industry towards sustainability in the way that forestry and fishery certification programs have. Experts debate this, but foundations willing to support advocacy campaigns could play a crucial role here too. Conroy reveals that: “the global tourism

industry and its major corporate players are vulnerable to a dramatic and powerful attack from well-positioned international NGOs. It’s not that there are no social and environmental problems in the industry; they just have not yet drawn the attention of advocacy groups who understand how to organize and launch market campaigns against the industry leaders.

such as TIES, CESD, and BEST), and the exchange and reporting of lessons and best practices gleaned from them will also continue to be critical.

Intervention Point 3: Re-granting and Program Related Investments

With broader acceptance of ecotourism standards and sustainable tourism certification, a move towards better execution of ecotourism projects at the site level, and increased information sharing—all resulting from strategic investments in the intervention points above—ecotourism projects could prove to be less risky than commonly perceived. Currently, because of the unique

nature of the ecotourism field, most projects face a daunting challenge in securing the sort of financing at the scale of small and medium enterprises (the bulk of multi- and bilateral development funding functions at a much larger scale), and which allows for triple bottom line accounting where time horizons are more distant and where mitigation of environmental externalities shifts the gauge on returns.

Through re-granting mechanisms, even the largest foundations can include smaller grants in a broader grantmaking portfolio at the scale of local community-based ecotourism projects; through program related investments (PRIs), foundations can tap into resources beyond grant budgets and support commercial enterprise, as “patient” or “risk” capital that allows for longer holding periods and higher degrees of risk.

Intervention Point 4: Travelers’ Philanthropy

Finally, foundations can harness their administrative and operating expenses to help reduce negative environmental impacts from staff travel and have a positive impact on the tourism industry. As highlighted by Michael Seltzer in his “Grantmakers’ Travel Tips” for the September/October 2004 *Foundation News & Commentary*, “travelers’ philanthropy” describes the benefits to community development and conservation that individuals and groups can confer with their own financial resources, time, and energy.



Kuyimá’s eco-friendly tent cabins on the shore of San Ignacio Lagoon (see following page, “PRIs”). Nearby are sun-heated freshwater showers.

PRIs: “Bankable Cash Flows” for Ecotourism Ventures in Baja California

The David and Lucile Packard Foundation’s Conservation and Science Program supports efforts in the Gulf of California region “to protect, value, and sustainably use” the biological resources of the coastal and marine ecosystems.⁸⁵ Since 1980, the Foundation has also strategically employed program related investments to complement its grantmaking. According to Curt Riffle, Conservation and Science Program Operations Manager, these PRIs are program-driven: in considering each opportunity, the Foundation must evaluate if and how a PRI would fit within programmatic guidelines and help the program meet its goals.⁸⁶

Together with Root Capital (formerly EcoLogic Finance), the Foundation identified a need in the Baja region for loans to small enterprises with a demonstrated interest in sustainable business operations, which would, in turn, directly advance the objectives of the Foundation’s Gulf of California grantmaking program. Built into the PRI was a stipulation that financing could be used only for work that aligned with the Packard Foundation’s marine-conservation objectives in the region. Resulting loans included funding to convert to more eco-friendly and efficient four-stroke engines for fishing boats, to upgrade to newer, less destructive fishing equipment, and—as an illustration of the critically needed but often elusive financing for ecotourism ventures—upgrading low-impact camping equipment and infrastructure for whale-watching ecotourism enterprises in Laguna San Ignacio, a UN World Heritage Site that marks the termination of the endangered Pacific Gray Whale’s migration route, and which remains the Gray Whale’s last undeveloped breeding ground and nursery.⁸⁷

In December 2006, Root Capital awarded a \$42,000 loan at 10% per annum to Laguna Baja ARIC (Asociación Rural de Interés Colectivo), a federation

of nine community-based ecotourism enterprises operating inside Laguna San Ignacio. In addition to helping the enterprises upgrade a low-impact camping ground on the shores of the lagoon, the loan also allowed for the purchase of three more fuel-efficient motors and one passenger van for transporting customers to the site. Root Capital structured the loan around twelve monthly payments of principal and interest over three tourism cycles (3.5 years), and reports that:

“the seasonal ecotourism businesses of Kuyimá and Cantil Rey Laguna, the two member enterprises financed by Root Capital, generated consolidated sales of more than \$380,000 in 2006, netting profits of just under \$68,000. Reporting another \$45,000 in consolidated annual fishing sales, ARIC members offer a model of how the whale-watching industry can marry conservation goals with economic rewards at the grass-roots level. ARIC has made their scheduled 2007 payments on time and have completed the investment.”⁸⁸

The Packard Foundation’s funding for Root Capital’s Baja portfolio of loans serves as an example of the unique power of PRIs. First, they serve as an extra pool of money for programmatic work outside a limited grants budget. Beyond serving as an additional monetary resource, Riffle points out that a PRI structured in this manner can benefit more people and have a farther-reaching effect, and, because the loans have to be repaid, can also function “to institute a whole different discipline,” encouraging conservation-minded organizations to “think like a business.” In this sense, the Packard Foundation and Root Capital together delivered exactly the sort of “bankable cash flows” that Heher highlights as desperately needed if ecotourism ventures—and the field itself—are to succeed.

Travelers' Philanthropy

Foundations can reinforce their programmatic missions by engaging in "travelers' philanthropy" to benefit destination communities and ecosystems. Here are some other suggestions, including "Grantmakers' Travel Tips" from Michael Seltzer, first reported in *Foundation News & Commentary*, September/October, 2004.⁸⁹

- ☀ Nothing has a bigger impact on an organization's carbon footprint than staff air travel, according to the Center for Resource Solutions. When possible, condense time on the road and take fewer flights. If you have to fly, calculate your emissions and purchase a carbon offset.
- ☀ Substitute plane and car travel with train travel, which uses 50% less energy than planes do, per passenger mile.
- ☀ If you have to drive a car, try to rent energy-efficient and hybrid models.
- ☀ Use public mass transportation, group shuttles, bicycles, and your feet!
- ☀ Choose locally-owned and "green" lodging.
- ☀ Look for tours offered by local or indigenous people.
- ☀ If you have the time, volunteer for local community service.
- ☀ For more ideas, take a look at the tips for "Savvy Travelers" offered by Rainforest Alliance: <http://www.rainforest-alliance.org/tourism.cfm?id=tips>.

KEY ECOTOURISM PARTNERS AND RESOURCES

Business Enterprises for Sustainable Travel (BEST)
www.sustainabletravel.org

Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA)
www.acdi-cida.gc.ca

Center on Ecotourism and Sustainable Development (CESD)
www.ecotourismcesd.org

Conservation International (CI)
www.conservation.org

The Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund
<http://www.cepf.net/>

Verde Ventures
<http://www.conservation.org/xp/verdeventures/>

Development Assistance Network for Tourism Enhancement and Investment (DANTEI)
www.dantei.org

The Department for International Development (DFID)
www.dfid.gov.uk

Environmental Business Finance Program (EBFP)
www.ifc.org/ebfp

European Commission Tourism Unit (EC)
http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/services/tourism/index_en.htm

Global Greengrants Fund
www.greengrants.org

Green Globe 21
www.greenglobe21.com

InterAmerican Development Bank (IADB) and Multilateral Investment Fund (MIF)
<http://www.iadb.org/mif/>

International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED)
www.iied.org

National Geographic Society
www.nationalgeographic.com

Organization of American States (OAS)
www.oas.org/tourism

Oxfam International
www.oxfam.org

Rainforest Alliance (RA)
www.ra.org

RARE Enterprises
www.rareconservation.org/programs/page.php?subsection=Rare%20Enterprises

Root Capital (formerly EcoLogic Finance)
www.rootcapital.org

SNV Netherlands Development Organization,
 Sustainable Tourism Program
<http://www.snvworld.org/irj/portal/anonymous?NavigationTarget=navurl://6b762e1c65c47cda14ca3976d434efd3>

Society for Technical Cooperation (GTZ)
www.gtz.de

Sustainable Tourism for Eliminating Poverty (STEP)
<http://www.world-tourism.org/step/index.htm>

TearFund
www.tearfund.org

The International Ecotourism Society (TIES)
www.ecotourism.org

The Nature Conservancy
www.nature.org/aboutus/travel/ecotourism/about/art14829.html

Tourism Concern
www.tourismconcern.org.uk

Travel Foundation
www.thetravelfoundation.org.uk

United Nations Development Program (UNDP/GEF)
www.undp.org/gef/05/

UNDP/GEF Small Grants program,
www.undp.org/sgp

United Nations Environment Program (UNEP/GEF)
<http://dgef.unep.org>

United States Agency for International Development (USAID)
www.usaid.gov

USAID Tourism Project Database,
www.nric.net/pub_project/proj_pubsearch.cfm?Searchtopic=ST

Voluntary Initiatives for Sustainability in Tourism (VISIT)
<http://www.visit21.net/>

World Bank
www.worldbank.org

World Tourism Organisation (WTO)
www.world-tourism.org

World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC)
www.wttc.org

World Wildlife Fund (WWF)
www.wwf.org

Foundations Engaged in Ecotourism Funding⁹⁰

Foundation	Grantee	Grant Amount	Description	Year (of 990)
ALASKA CONSERVATION FOUNDATION	Alaska Wilderness Recreation & Tourism Association	\$500.00	Sponsorship of the Annual Eco-tourism Conference	2006
ALEX C. WALKER EDUCATIONAL AND CHARITABLE FOUNDATION	The Nature Conservancy (Fairfax)	\$100,000.00	Tourism-based revenue generation for protected area	2004
CHARLES STEWART MOTT FOUNDATION	Institute for Policy Studies	\$50,000.00	To support the development of international standards for eco-tourism projects that respect the rights and interests of indigenous peoples	2005
CHARLES STEWART MOTT FOUNDATION	Carpathian Foundation, regrant to Foundation for the Eastern Carpathians Biodiv Cons Switzerland	\$15,000.00	To build the capacity of Nadsyansky Regional Landscape Park and its local communities to cooperate with neighbouring areas in Poland, to initiate development of sustainable tourism in the area, and to improve NRLP visibility and promote its natural, historical and cultural values.	2005
CHARLES STEWART MOTT FOUNDATION	Carpathian Foundation, regrant to Association of Economic development of Ivano-Frankivsk	\$70,900.00	Establishment of a network of sustainable institutions that would open new perspectives for sustainable development of Yaremche microregion communities, particularly through tourism industry development.	2005
CHARLES STEWART MOTT FOUNDATION	Carpathian Foundation, regrant to Baltagul Foundation	\$3,800.00	Promoting the tourism in the project area and preserving the tourist objectives namely the ecotouristic ones. Preparatory stage for IRCD 2005 round.	2005
CHARLES STEWART MOTT FOUNDATION	Carpathian Foundation, regrant to Association "Synij Vyr"	\$1,050.00	To establish an environmental education club "Ranger" to popularize knowledge in the field of ecology, culture and tourism among youth, and use this knowledge while providing recreational services.	2005

Foundation	Grantee	Grant Amount	Description	Year (of 990)
CHRISTENSEN FUND	International Institute for Urban Development, Inc.	\$70,000.00	To develop local and regional government policy to support agrobiodiversity, agroprocessing, and socially inclusive eco-tourism in the Kars area of N.E. Turkey.	2005
COMPTON FOUNDATION INC	International Ecotourism Society	\$10,000.00		2004
DAVID AND LUCILE PACKARD FOUNDATION	Centra de Investigation en Alimentacion y Desarrollo, A.C.	\$200,000.00	For a coastal tourism development watchdog network and a sustainable tourism forum.	2005
DAVID AND LUCILE PACKARD FOUNDATION	Comunidad v Biodiversidad. A.C.	\$15,000.00	To assess the feasibility of forming a community-based ecotourism program that would promote environmental standard-setting and certification.	2005
FLORA L THORNTON FOUNDATION	International Ecotourism Society	\$60,000.00		2004
FORD FOUNDATION	Society of Pollution and Environmental Conservation Scientists, Dehra Dun India	\$38,814.00	To promote equitable, community-based ecotourism in the Nanda Devi Biosphere Reserve	2005
FORD FOUNDATION	Hue College of Economics, Hue City Vietnam	\$100,000.00	For the development and implementation of an English-language-based undergraduate program in responsible tourism	2005
FORD FOUNDATION	African Wildlife Foundation	\$150,000.00	Tie-off support to implement a natural resource management plan that promotes ecotourism in the Kijabe Group Ranch.....	2005
FORD FOUNDATION	Ecotourism Society of Kenya	\$150,000.00	To promote and transform ecotourism knowledge into assets to improve livelihoods in natural resource-dependent communities in Kenya	2005

Foundation	Grantee	Grant Amount	Description	Year (of 990)
FORD FOUNDATION	Ecotourism Society of Kenya	\$160,000.00	Tie-off general support for organizational development to enhance ESOK's capacity to promote ethical, sustainable tourism...	2005
FORD FOUNDATION	Union of Indigenous Communities of the Isthmus Region, Oaxaca	\$100,000.00	To design a community-based ecotourism model, develop plans for training and implementation and contract the expertise needed	2005
FORD FOUNDATION	Tourism Business Council of South Africa	\$100,000.00	To explore linkages between tourism and indigenous industries	2005
FORD FOUNDATION	Technoserve, Inc.	\$42,300.00	To develop an ecotourism best practices guide based upon the experience and achievements of Manda Wilderness for dissemination...	2005
FORD FOUNDATION	Mozambican Association of Mutual Support	\$150,000.00	For community organizing on land and natural resources to increase community access to private investment ventures in tourism...	2005
FORD FOUNDATION	The International Ecotourism Society, Inc.	\$600,000.00	For the development of a new Sustainable Tourism Stewardship Council to set standards and accredit certifiers...	2005
FORD FOUNDATION	Lewa Wildlife Conservancy	\$100,000.00	To establish the Ngare Ndare Forest Trust and develop an integrated approach to ecotourism in Northern Kenya.	2005
FORD FOUNDATION	Uganda Community Tourism Association	\$75,000.00	To enhance the livelihoods of natural resource dependent communities in rural Uganda.	2005
FORD FOUNDATION	ABC Ulwazi	\$535,000.00	For training, program production and technical assistance to help community radio stations promote local economic development and job creation in community-based tourism.	2005

Foundation	Grantee	Grant Amount	Description	Year (of 990)
FORD FOUNDATION	Balate Ba Lekrophung Development Trust	\$100,000.00	Recoverable grant to assist in the development of a community-based tourism project within the Madikwe Game Reserve in South Africa.	2005
GARFIELD FOUNDATION	CPI-Chaco (Commission of the Indigenous Peoples and Communities of the Bolivian Chaco) smaller regrant (to CABI Caoitania of upper and lower Isozo and Kaa Iva National Park)	\$40,000.00	To assist the indigenous co-managers of Kaa Iya National Park to assert an active role in Kaa Iya's protection and development - marking the border in response to threats, assessing the potential impacts of tourism on communities, and involving women and youth to consolidate community solidarity with the park.	2005
GERALDINE R DODGE FOUNDATION INC	South Jersey Tourism Corporation	\$40,000.00	for support of a comprehensive ecotourism planning effort for South Jersey	2005
HAROLD K L CASTLE FOUNDATION	Conservation International	\$25,000.00	To engage the tourism industry as a force for marine conservation in Hawaii	2005
HARRIS AND ELIZA KEMPNER FUND	Galveston Island Nature Tourism Council, Inc.	\$4,000.00	Operations grant for match	2005
JENIAM CLARKSON FOUNDATION	American Bird Conservancy	\$28,700.00	Eco-tourism facilities	2005
JOHN D & CATHERINE T MACARTHUR FOUNDATION	Rare	\$170,500.00	AGAIN (unpaid as of 990): In support of ecotourism enterprises development In Grenada, the Dominican Republic, and Cuba (over three years).	2005
JOHN D & CATHERINE T MACARTHUR FOUNDATION	Rwanda Office of Tourism and National Parks	\$500,000.00	In support of the establishment of a conservation training center (over three years).	2005

Foundation	Grantee	Grant Amount	Description	Year (of 990)
JOHN D & CATHERINE T MACARTHUR FOUNDATION	World Wildlife Fund Canada Fonds Mondial Pour La Nature Canada	\$245,000.00	In support of policies to mitigate the negative impacts of mass tourism and expand options for small-scale, nature-based visitation In Cuba (over three years)	2005
LINTILHAC FOUNDATION	Northern Forest Canoe Trail	\$1,000.00	To support the creation of two nature-based tourism itineraries in Northern Vermont	2006
MCKNIGHT FOUNDATION	Mlup Baitong	\$20,000.00	For a Community-based Eco-Tourism project in Cambodia	2005
MCKNIGHT FOUNDATION	Uganda Community Tourism Association	\$75,000.00	To support community-based tourism businesses	2005
OCEAN FOUNDATION	The International Ecotourism Society/ Center for Ecotourism and Sustainable Development (Martha Honey)	\$1,000.00	Research on the benefits from tourism derived by MPAs internationally	2005
OVERBROOK FOUNDATION	Rainforest Alliance	\$140,000.00	Biodiversity conservation in the tourism industry in Ecuador	2005
OVERBROOK FOUNDATION	Rare	\$60,000.00	Creating a Toolbox for Conservation Entrepreneurs Using Rare's Ecotourism Model in Sian Ka'an Biosphere Reserve, Mexico	2005
ROCKEFELLER BROTHERS FUND INC	International Ecotourism Society	\$30,000.00	For a project to promote sustainable tourism in Northern Montenegro	2005
ROCKEFELLER FOUNDATION	Chiang Mai University	\$24,500.00	for use by Its Social Research Institute to undertake the first phase of a collaborative study of the tourism Industry In the Greater Mekong Sub-region and Its multiple Impacts on socio-economic development, culture and the environment	2005

Foundation	Grantee	Grant Amount	Description	Year (of 990)
ROCKEFELLER FOUNDATION	Chiang Mai University	\$141,063.00	for use by Ms Social Research Institute toward the costs of phase two of a collaborative study of the tourism Industry In the Greater Mekong Sub-region and Its multiple Impacts on socio-economic development, culture and the environment	2005
ROSE FOUNDATION FOR COMMUNITIES AND THE ENVIRONMENT	Redwood Economic Development Institute	\$46,954.00	Supported the ongoing development of model eco-tourism projects on California's North Coast	2005
ROY A HUNT FOUNDATION	Rainforest Alliance	\$40,000.00	sustainable tourism products marketing project	2006
SUMMIT CHARITABLE FOUNDATION INC	Stanford University	\$48,385.00	Analysis of economic, environmental and socio-cultural impacts of cruise tourism in Belize	2005
SUMMIT CHARITABLE FOUNDATION INC	Belize Audubon Society	\$30,000.00	to support an ecotourism alliance of NGOs to generate revenue for conservation in Belize	2005
THE KOREIN FOUNDATION	Rainforest Alliance	\$5,000.00	Support for sustainable development in ecotourism, forestry and agriculture	2005
THE MARISLA FOUNDATION	Fondacion Otway, Chile	\$40,000.00	Support for a penguin conservation and environmental education / sustainable tourism project on the Island of Chiloe in Southern Chile, including the acquisition of lands to create a core preserve area around threatened penguin colonies.	2005
UNITED NATIONS FOUNDATION	UNESCO	\$200,000.00	Strengthening the links of biodiversity conservation and sustainable tourism at World Heritage Sites	2005
UNITED NATIONS FOUNDATION	The International Ecotourism Society	\$2,500.00	Conference on ecotourism in the United States	2005

Foundation	Grantee	Grant Amount	Description	Year (of 990)
UNITED NATIONS FOUNDATION	UNESCO	\$57,225.00	Promoting conservation through sustainable local tourism development at World Heritage Sites; focus on engaging the private sector	2005
UNITED NATIONS FOUNDATION	UNESCO	\$40,000.00	Strengthening the WHC's sustainable tourism program	2005
UPS FOUNDATION INC	Foundation for the Protection of Environment and Tourism	\$25,000.00	n/a	2005
W K KELLOGG FOUNDATION	Thusano Lefatsheng Trust, Botswana	\$70,000.00	Develop eco-tourism in LETLHAKENG through...	2005
W K KELLOGG FOUNDATION	Thusano Lefatsheng Trust, Botswana	\$135,000.00	Develop eco-tourism in LETLHAKENG through...	2005
W K KELLOGG FOUNDATION	Tourism Business Council of South Africa	\$108,000.00	Strengthen the potential of the tourism sector by...	2005
W K KELLOGG FOUNDATION	Tourism Business Council of South Africa	\$200,000.00	Strengthen the potential of the tourism sector by...	2005
WILLIAM PENN FOUNDATION	Greater Philadelphia Tourism Marketing Corporation	\$1,000,000.00	Toward the implementation of a marketing initiative. Think Outside, developed in coordination with regional stakeholders, to promote Greater Philadelphia's natural assets and outdoor recreational and stewardship opportunities.	2005

ENDNOTES

- 1 Martha Honey, *Ecotourism and Sustainable Development: Who Owns Paradise?* (Washington, DC: Island Press, 1999) 4.
- 2 Julianne Baroody, "The Rainforest Alliance and Sustainable Tourism: Greening the Industry One Step at a Time," presentation at Yale University, May 3, 2007.
- 3 Martha Honey, *Ecotourism & Certification: Setting Standards in Practice*, (Washington, DC: Island Press, 2002) 7.
- 4 "Distribution of Foundation Grants by Subject Categories, Circa 2005," FC Stats: The Foundation Center's Statistical Information Service, accessed August 25, 2007 at http://foundationcenter.org/findfunders/statistics/pdf/04_fund_sub/2005/10_05.pdf.
- 5 "Global Travel and Tourism Exceeded USD 6 Trillion in 2005," World Travel and Tourism Council, accessed August 25, 2007 at www.wttc.org/eng/News_and_Events/Press/Press_Releases_2006/Global_travel_exceeded_USD_6_trillion_in_2005/index.php.
- 6 "Definitions and Principles," The International Ecotourism Society, accessed August 20, 2007 at www.ecotourism.org/webmodules/webarticlesnet/templates/eco_template.aspx?articleid=95&zoneid=2.
- 7 Ibid.
- 8 Based on available data for U.S. foundations, gathered through digital keyword searches of 990-PFs (ecotourism or "sustainable tourism" or ecotravel or "eco-travel" or "eco-tourism") through Foundation Search America (only U.S. organizations). Research complemented by interviews with foundation staff. While attempts have been made to confirm this data with other sources (e.g. interviews, Guidestar 990s) not all data has been verified. The aggregate total is conservative: funding for any ecotourism projects that did not have these keywords included in either grantee names or grant descriptions would not be included in this data, unless highlighted during interviews with foundation staff, and some keywords may not register electronically due to scanning or data mining irregularities. Please note that additional research on grants by foundations and charities based in other regions, particularly in Canada and Europe, is needed (and would bring this total still higher), but was outside the scope of this project.
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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This paper was researched and written in conjunction with a graduate fellowship with the Environmental Grantmakers Association. Funding for the project was provided by the Ripley Family Foundation's International Environmental Internship program for the Yale School of Management. Grateful recognition is also due for the guidance of Yale faculty advisors Garry Brewer, Frederick K. Weyerhaeuser Professor of Resource Policy and Management, and Cheryl Doss, Lecturer, Department of Economics, and Director of Graduate Studies, MA Program in International Relations.

This report would not be possible without the generous time and voluntary participation of the editorial committee members:

Michael Conroy, Colibrí Consulting – Certification for Sustainable Development

Dana Lanza, Environmental Grantmakers Association

Aileen Lee, Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation

Michael Northrop, Rockefeller Brothers Fund

Additional thanks to the many individuals at NGOs and foundations who provided information on their organizations' ecotourism and sustainable tourism activities.

PRODUCTION EDITOR: Dana Lanza

DESIGN: Design Action Collective

Data on foundation giving compiled through FoundationSearch, a database driven tool for identifying funding sources and analyzing their historical giving trends.

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Produced by Environmental Grantmakers Association, January 2008